



College Selection Process: Does Faith of an Institution Influence the Decision-Making?

Anna Parks

Advisor: Dr. Graham Hunter

Research Questions

- How do students who choose to attend a Catholic and Marianist university describe their college decision process?
- To what extent is the institution's religious affiliation evaluated during the college decision process?

Participants

Random sampling of 26 first-year students at the University of Dayton.

Methods

Survey sent to each student which included a mixture of open-ended and numerical questions where students had the opportunity to rate their feelings and opinions on a 1-5 scale (1 being the least important and 5 being the most important).

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this research is to understand why students choose to attend a Catholic and Marianist institution. The goal is to understand why the students chose a Catholic and Marianist institution, and what other factors go into the college decision-making process.

Findings

- 80.8% of the students were not familiar with the religious identity of the University of Dayton prior to attending
- On a 1-5 scale (1 being the least important and 5 being the most important), the most influential factors for choosing a college were: academics, financial cost, and location
- On a 1-5 scale, the average for importance of the University of Dayton's Catholic and Marianist identity is 2.57

In the open-ended responses, common themes in why students ultimately chose the University of Dayton were the sense of community and fit, family ties, academic opportunities, and financial reasons.

"I saw myself here more than anywhere else."

Future Implications

- University recruitment efforts: emphasize what student finds most important
- Help potential students understand the Marianist tradition

Conclusion

From the research conducted, it can be concluded that faith is not the strongest factor that influences a student's decision to attend an institution. Factors such as finances, location, and academics have a stronger impact on the decision-making process than the religious affiliation of the university.